



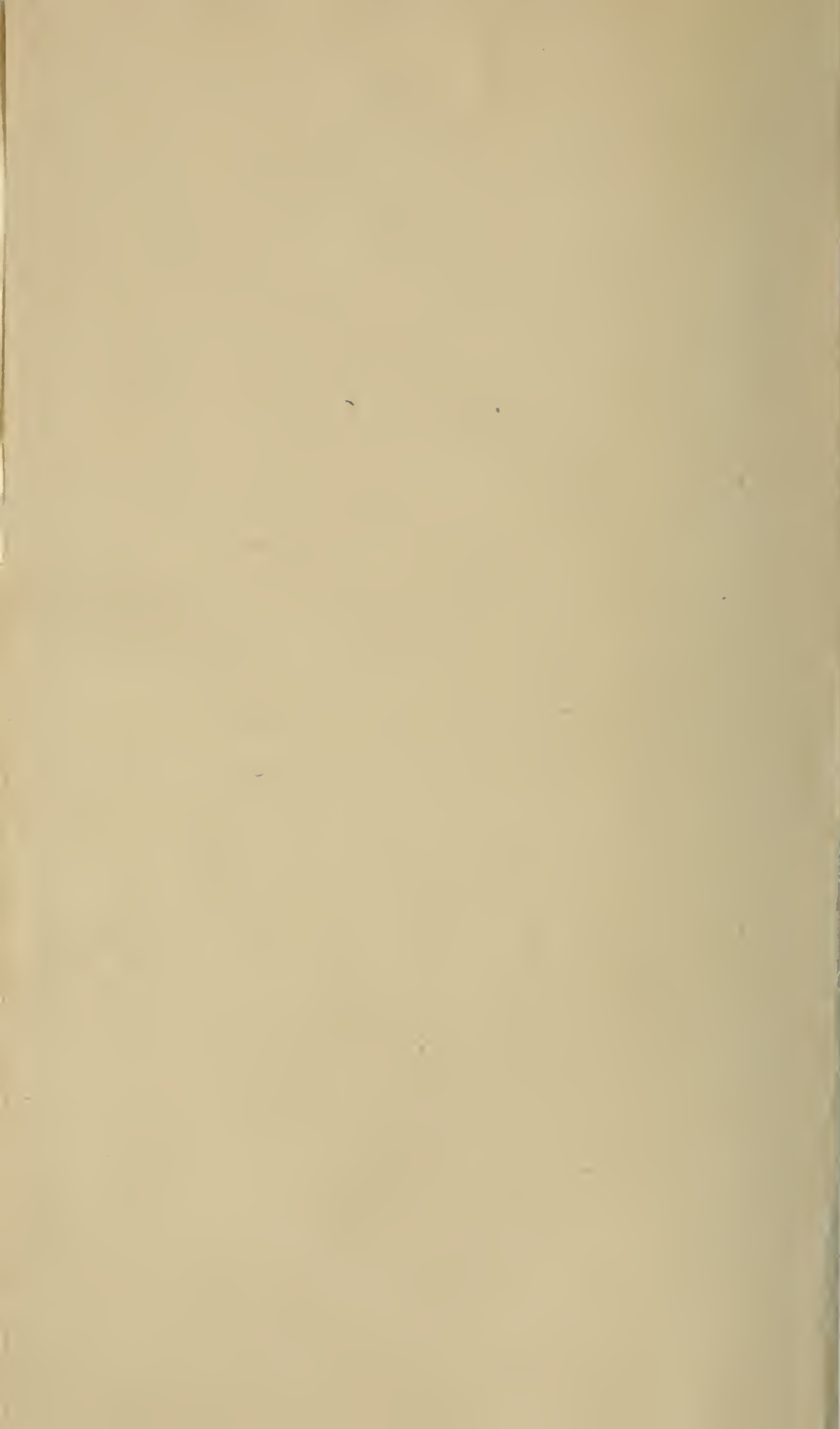
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A  
**Masterpiece on Politics,**

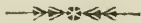
IN  
TEN LETTERS:

ADDRESSED TO  
**MR. G. BEAUMONT,**  
Minister of the Gospel,

AT  
*NORWICH.*

CONTAINING  
EIGHTY ARGUMENTS TO SHEW THAT IT IS THE DUTY OF ALL  
MEN, BUT ESPECIALLY CHRISTIANS, TO ATTEND TO POLITICS.

*Recommended to the Perusal of all Classes of Society.*



BY WILLIAM ANDREW,

AUTHOR OF "A LETTER FROM A TRADESMAN IN LONDON TO HIS UNCLE IN  
YORKSHIRE."



"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."



**London:**

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A  
MASTERPIECE ON POLITICS,  
§c. §c.

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LETTER I.

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London, March 19th, 1819.

FRIEND BEAUMONT,

IN a printed letter addressed to Mr. P. A., an uncle of mine, dated February 19th, 1819, I expressed an intention of addressing a series of Letters to you.

I did not mention on what subject I would write; however, the subject on which I intend to address you at present, may chiefly be included in the word politics; the meaning of that word you know relates to the public administration of affairs. But I have no need to tell you what it means, you have been conversant with it for many years; it has a meaning with you that has caused you in some measure to attend to it; it has a meaning with others, that has caused them to heap upon you such a load of calumny as but few men in your situation have had to bear in our day. When in the discharge of your duty as a feeling man, and a minister of the Gospel, you visited the abodes of wretchedness and poverty, in cellars and garrets, in comfortless apartments, scarcely straw to lie on, and grains for food; when you saw this with your eyes, and felt compassion with your heart, you gave scope to your thoughts in search for the cause of so much misery, you traced the cause to arise from the mismanagement of public affairs, and from the monopoly of the rich. You did not do as too many visitors of poverty do. You did not begin, and tell the poor wretches that it was the providence of God, and they must be patient and submissive. No; you did not ascribe their sufferings to that God whose tender mercy is over all his works, and who is too good to be unkind; and as you did not look up to heaven for the spring of misery, neither did you look down to the dust of the earth, for you had read that afflictions do not spring out of the dust. But you, like the good Samaritan of old, thought what should be done to get your neighbour out of his misery. The good Samaritan did not preach a lecture on patience

to his neighbour, and then leave him to suffer on, till it should please God to cure him. No; he poured oil into his wounds, set him on his own beast, and took him to an inn, and got him such protection as the poor man needed. We do not read that the good Samaritan ascribed the poor man's sufferings to the providence of God. No; had he done this, and poured oil into his wounds, and given him a lecture on patience, and then left him, he would have done as the generous of our day do in general. The good Samaritan knew the poor man had fallen for want of protection, he therefore gave him such protection as he was able. And you, in following his example, poured in your oil, (money) took up your pen, and advocated the cause of the poor; for, "Blessed is the man that considereth the poor."

After describing the miseries of the poor, you were led to declaim against the monopolisers of land, of corn, of cotton, &c. You were led to declaim against the proceedings of government in their cruel and wicked ways; you were led to declaim against a paper system, and various other matters. This work you entitled "The Beggar's Complaint;" and though the sale of this Beggar's Complaint was not very large, yet it created you many enemies; and your enemies called this Complaint a political book against government, for writing and publishing which they persecuted you, and ill treated you, and cast out your name as evil. They represented your book to have the same effect as the temptation of the devil has; that is, to deceive and bring men to ruin. Yea, one of your enemies went so far as to ascribe some of the hangings of the Ludites to have been brought on by the influence of your Beggar's Complaint.

This representation wounded your very soul; you saw that not only your usefulness as a preacher of the Gospel was likely to be injured, but your very life endangered. After some sleepless nights, and unhappy days, you again took up your pen. As you had used the pen with a desire to protect the poor, you now ventured the same weapon to protect yourself; with this weapon you gave your enemies such a drubbing as they will not forget while they stop in this world. Indeed, you have had a specimen of their long memory, in the opposition they have shewed against all your conciliatory propositions. This book, in which you gave your enemy such a drubbing, you called "The Helmet." In this Helmet you described the characters of your enemies, and the means they made use of for your overthrow. You were so warm in this, that many of your friends thought you were too severe, and went beyond the bounds of Christian principles. Your enemies took the advantage of words you had made use of in the Helmet; words that were only too keen for a minister of the Gospel to make use of, as some thought. I never thought them too keen, for I thought that the persecution you had met with had caused such keen feelings in your mind, that keen words were a natural consequence. However, your enemies took the advantage of the words,

and mustered all their force, and effected your separation from the people, amongst whom you had laboured with success for about sixteen years; this separation took place at the Handby Conference, in the year 1814.

The society at Norwich, amongst whom you had for one or two years preached, were not satisfied with your separation, as well as many other members of the connection in various parts of England. However, the society at Norwich rebelled against the order of Conference, sent back the preacher the Conference sent them, and kept you instead. Things went on, and you remained at Norwich another year: during that year, some of your friends advised reconciliation. You, and the Society at Norwich, tendered terms of reconciliation to the next Conference, which met at Leeds, but, both yours and the Society's were rejected. You both tried a second time the following year, but the overture was rejected again. Strangers to these events would suppose that your enemies were the monopolisers of land, corn, &c., and those that you had wrote against in your Beggar's Complaint. But, no; strange to tell, they were your brethren in the ministry, and not ministers of a different denomination, but ministers in the same connection with yourself; ministers that had been chosen by the same people that chose you; ministers that were supported by the same voluntary contributions as you were. And that resolution they passed at the Manchester Conference, in the year 1813, prohibiting the liberty of the press to any of their preachers, so far as respects works of a political nature, I say that resolution will stand as a disgrace to the connection, so long as it is a connection, and will be too absurd almost for future Christians to believe possible.

Let me here observe, for the sake of clearness to strangers, that these events took place in what is denominated the Methodist New Connection.

There you are, then, at Norwich, after so much persecution for advocating the cause of the poor, which your enemies call meddling with politics; there you are, you and your wife, I hope well in health, and prosperous as a minister.

A few evenings since, an acquaintance of mine called, and in our conversation hit upon you. He vindicated the conduct of your enemies, and censured yours for meddling with politics. I advised him to get a knowledge of politics before he ventured to judge of the propriety of others meddling with them. He started from it, as if the word politics contained some meaning not only hurtful, but ruinous to piety.

Seeing, then, that there is still such a dread in the minds of some religious people against politics, I intend, in my next Letter to you, to enter into the matter candidly, and see if I can find out what politics really are, and the propriety or impropriety of religious people meddling with politics. In the mean time I remain,

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

WILLIAM ANDREW.

P. S. I have not mentioned the above events with a view to stir up old grievances. No; nor yet to represent the Methodist New Connection as the most ignorant in the religious world respecting politics. So far as I am acquainted with various sects, I have reason to believe, the Methodist New Connection is the most forward to meddle with politics, for which they have been calumniated by other sects as a set of Jacobins. All I have in view in mentioning the above events is, to prove that there is a great prejudice in the minds of the religious world against politics; and this prejudice is so great, as to cause them to persecute severely any official character that meddles with politics. And if I should be able in the consideration of politics, to discover that it is the will of God that all men should attend to them, (and I think I shall) it is an awful error in the religious world thus to fight against God.

## LETTER II.

London, April 6, 1819.

FRIEND BEAUMONT,

I PROMISED in my last Letter to you, to enquire what politics are. The word politics, and the word religion, are two great words. The word religion we find in the Bible; the word politics doth not exist in the Bible, that I know of. There is the word Commonwealth, which word means the same as the word politics. To obtain, or maintain, a something called political rights, or religious rights, has caused mankind to slaughter each other by thousands in a day, times without number. How necessary it is, then, that all men should be well acquainted with the meaning of those two great words; especially, seeing that all of us in this kingdom are liable to be called upon to bear arms if able, to obtain, or maintain, something called religion, or political rights.

I once paid ten pounds to free myself from being enrolled in the local militia; at a time, too, when I was very poor. I had to borrow the money, and pay it again at a few shillings per week out of my hard earnings; at a time too when my wife had a three months' lying-in, occasioned by a cold she caught the third day of her confinement. Of what vast importance, then, must politics and religion be of, when men's property, persons, and lives are at stake in defence of those two words; for men to be ignorant of politics and religion, and yet hazard their lives in defence of them, is absurd to an extreme. And yet I believe, that most of the wars among men have arisen from a general ignorance of them both; and if we could but prevail upon mankind to get a good understanding of both politics and religion, there would be an end to wars, so long as that good understanding continued.

Many, in attempting to give man true notions of religion, have had to lay down their lives as a price for the injury that men in power have supposed them to have done. Many have attempted to give man information relative to politics, and for which they have suffered much. Many have argued, that it is an ignorance of religion that causeth men to war one against another; on this account, they have not only thought it unnecessary, but unwise to meddle with politics, seeing that all depended upon the success of the Gospel, and that man must be cured at the heart before universal peace could be expected. This has been the prevailing opinion of many of those who have attended most to religion in our day. And for a proof of this opinion, they have quoted part of the fourth chapter of James. I believe that passage has been

wrongly applied many times. It is not very easy for me to separate politics from religion; it would be as easy for me to separate the two great commandments. However, some have separated a something called religion, from a something called politics, and have said, a general understanding in that religion will put an end to wars. I will take the same liberty of separating politics from religion, and assert, that an attention to politics would be the nearest road to general peace amongst men.

Some religious men's prejudices against politics arise exactly from the same mode of reasoning, as the prejudice of other men against religion. Some men that are prejudiced against religion, have always uppermost in their minds certain characters that they have known or heard of, who pretended to be so good, and make so much to do about religion, that they were bothering every body to be religious. And, behold, these same religious characters (they always have in their minds) were guilty of this, that, and the other; therefore, having observed such inconsistency between the practice and profession of these characters, they, without thinking of religion any further than this, have got a notion in their minds that religion means inconsistency, and if they happen to talk about religion, they are always attempting to prove their notion to be well grounded. By a reference to certain characters, and though some of these observers may be drunkards, swearers, sabbath-breakers, liars, &c. yet as they do not pretend to be good, they are consistent, and every body knows that consistency in itself is a virtue, and inconsistency in itself is a vice; therefore, the natural conclusion in their minds is, that though they are drunkards, and this, that, and the other, yet, because they are consistent, they are better than those that are inconsistent. And if any of their companions happen to turn religious, they all at once think he is going to be inconsistent, and do all they can to divert him from it; and to give him a hatred to religion, they talk about all the inconsistent characters they can think of.

Others think religion means a more moderate sort of behaviour, less swearing, less drunkenness, less sabbath-breaking, and an attendance at some place of worship occasionally. All this makes a man more respectable. But to engage in religion in that violent way, and go those lengths in it that some do, is ridiculous.

Just so it is with respect to politics, especially amongst the religious world. Many a religious man's notions about politics has been formed from his observations of men's conduct that have pretended to be politicians. He has observed some of them in public-houses talk for and against Government, and differ, and swear, and smoke, and drink till they were drunk, then go home, and abuse wife and children. When he has seen men thus pretend to know what was best to be done in public affairs, and act so wretchedly bad in their own private affairs, he has, without any further thought about it, concluded, that to meddle with politics was a bad thing.



Others have thought, that to have a moderate knowledge of politics was very well, and made a man more respectable ; to read the news occasionally, just to have an idea how public matters were going on, was very well. But to pretend to understand this, that, and the other, about politics, and make themselves any ways busy in it, was very foolish indeed ; and, in fact, no one could thus meddle with politics, and be religious, it is impossible. Therefore, I think, I have said enough to prove, that the religious man's prejudices against politics, arise from the same mode of reasoning, as other men's prejudices against religion : having done this, having brought the pious religious man's arguments against politics to be on a level with the arguments of the swearing drunkard against religion, I will chain them both together, with the chain of ignorance ; and unless they break that chain, they shall remain chained for life. Only think of the righteous man, and the drunken man chained together, and think of the chain ! !

Having said thus much about the word politics, and the word religion, let us now follow up the word politics. It seems by the conduct of those religious people that object to having any thing to do with politics, that they only mean that people should not waste their time in obtaining a knowledge of public affairs, for God has appointed rulers and men in authority to manage political matters, and all we have to do is to obey them, and reverence them, and pray for them ; but to find fault with rulers, and men in authority, is contrary to religion. For religion teaches men to be loyal, and respect dignities. This brings to my mind a sermon I heard last summer. When I got home, I sat down, and wrote the following letter to the preacher, but I never sent it.

“ Sir, on Sunday, May 24, 1818, I was at St. George's chapel, when you were preaching in the forenoon. In your description of a pious man, you said he was the most loyal man, and had the most respect for dignities, and the most love of country. Therefore, society made a man more loyal ; it made a man respect the higher powers ; it made a man love his country.

“ Now, Sir, you did not say what you meant by loyalty ; did you mean that sort of foolish, wicked loyalty that the children of Israel had when they first wanted a king ? After Samuel had described to them what sort of a greedy, ruinous thing a king would be, they were wicked, and foolish, and loyal enough to contradict the prophet, and said, ‘ Nay, but we will have a king.’ What wicked, loyal fools they were, after such a description as Samuel gives of a king, in his first book, eighth chapter, beginning at the tenth verse. O fools, I say again, to want such a monster as a king, when a prophet told them in the 8th verse, ‘ And ye shall cry in that day, because of your king, which you shall have chosen you, and the Lord will not hear you in that day.’

“ What wicked, loyal fools they were after this, to shout ‘ God gave the king.’ For after that, the Lord sent thunder, and rain, at the prophet's request ; as he saith, in chapter xii. verse 17,

‘ That ye may perceive and see, that your wickedness is great which ye have done in the sight of the Lord, in asking you a king.’ Now, Sir, where was the piety of the Jews at that time? they had loyalty enough to ruin themselves, and their children after them.

“ I wish you had told us what sort of piety, pious loyalty is, for it is as plain as the nose on your face, that Samuel was directed to appoint the Jews a king, because they would not be persuaded to be pious without one; and doth not God declare by his prophet Hosea, speaking of Israel, ‘ I gave thee a king in mine anger?’ And God frequently lets either individuals or nations have their wicked designs fulfilled, when they will not be persuaded.

“ Perhaps you meant that sort of loyalty which placemen, sinecure-men, and great pensioners have; that sort of loyalty which Oliver and his tribe of spies have; nay, I presume, you cannot think theirs is pious loyalty. I hardly know which way to look for this pious stuff; perhaps it is that sort of loyalty, that Bishops, Deans, Vicars, and Rectors have; if there be such a thing as pious loyalty, it ought to be found amongst them, surely. I believe there is a deal of loyalty amongst them, but I do not think their loyalty is produced by piety. I am apt to think it is produced by their livings, and that their loyalty is in proportion to their livings.

“ There is a loyalty that springs from ignorance, and is as praiseworthy as that piety that proceeds from ignorance. But this cannot be the loyalty that is interwoven with piety, as you described it, for I believe that piety is produced by divine illuminations, and divine influence; and that is it which puzzles me to find a loyalty that belongs to it. And there is another thing that puzzles me, if there be a loyalty that is produced by divine piety, how is that piety to be diffused in America, for they have none to call his Royal Highness, or his most Gracious Majesty, or our rightful Sovereign Lord the King. And I believe far better than in England; and the reason is evident, the doctrine of loyalty doth not smother it there.

“ I should certainly like to know what you mean by a pious man being the most loyal man, for if I should be one of those, that is, ‘ Striving to enter in at the straight gate,’ and am not able: it is of infinite importance that I be directed right. I have heard it asserted, that politics is a subject that religious people should not meddle with; and I believe you are one that hold that opinion; if so, how can pious people be loyal, for I think loyalty belongs to politics. And if a man pretends to love the king, because he is a king, without knowing any thing about his kingship, such a man is as forward in loyalty, as a man is in religion, that pretends to love God, and Jesus Christ, without knowing any thing about them, save only they have heard there are such beings. And perhaps this is the sort of loyalty you mean, else how is it, that at all times, you can assert, without knowing the moral state of the

king, whether it be like that of a saint, or a devil. Every Sunday you declare in the face of God, and the congregation, that he is the most religious sovereign.

“Again, you asserted the pious man has more respect for dignities than he would have had if he had not been pious. Pray, what did you mean by the word dignities? If you meant that the pious man had more respect for a pious minister of the Gospel than he had before he was pious, I grant you were correct; for a pious man doth respect a pious minister, at least so far as he has good reason to believe he is pious. But I rather think the dignity belonging to a true minister of the Gospel was not the dignity you meant: I think it was a dignity some way or other connected with loyalty. Some men get dignified for one thing, and some for another: some because they are rich. But piety doth not teach us to respect men merely because they are rich; if it did, how came the Apostle James to say, “Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you?” Some men get dignified because they have been leading an army, that has spread fire and sword, death and destruction, far and wide. You surely do not mean to say, that a pious man respects such dignified characters! Some are dignified, because they hold situations of great trust; and the greater the trust is, the greater the dignity. Hence, the office of king may be ranked amongst the highest of dignities. And so long as they use that trust for the purpose for which it is given them, they deserve respect. But if a pious man respects a king, without knowing what the king’s duty is, and what his practice is as a king, such pious man acts like a fool. But if a king misapplies his trust, and uses it to other purposes, contrary to those for which it was given him, he deserves contempt, and the greater the trust, the greater the contempt is due. If a king misapplies his trust he deserves a greater punishment than a constable that misapplies his trust. A steward of a house deserves greater punishment if he misapplies his trust, than his errand-boy that misapplies his trust. So that I see no professional dignity that a pious man can respect, any further than it is accompanied by moral dignity; and which the pious man ought to respect, whether it be found in a king or a beggar. And though piety teaches a man to practise that precept of the Gospel, where it saith, “Honour the king;” yet it makes him equally anxious to practise that other precept, “Honour all men.” Virtue, where ever it is found, deserves respect; for so far as it goes, it is a portrait of the Divine Being. But the contrary quality deserves contempt, whether it be found in a king or a beggar.

“You also asserted that a pious man has more love of country. But if I have any knowledge of divinity, I am led to believe, both from Scripture and experience, that piety has a tendency to lessen a man’s affections from earth and earthly things. And if you meant some particular state or kingdom, or country, town, or

village, if it was any of these, or all of them put together, piety is calculated to loosen his affections from them all, and give him an enlarged mind, so that he considers the whole earth is the Lord's, and that of one blood is made all the families of the earth. I know the pious man has a love of country, but then it is a country to come, and that is the reason he has less love for this country.

“If you mean by love of country that the pious man would defend his country against foreign enemies with great firmness and valour, you would first have to convince him that it would be just and right, for he would not be led into the field of battle in ignorance, like soldiers generally are; they are led by their officers, and their officers may be led by the devil, for any thing they know. But it would not be so with an army of pious men; for if they thought it necessary to take up arms, it would not matter to them whether it was a foreign or domestic enemy, for it would not be their attachment to a particular spot of earth that would make them fight, it would be a conviction in their minds, that the proceedings of their enemies ought not to be suffered to go unpunished; it would be a conviction similar to that that would strike their minds if they saw an herd of wild beast bearing down towards them and their families, they would put themselves in battle array against those wild beasts, and do their utmost to slay them, because they would consider those wild beasts as enemies to man.

“Therefore, if any man, or any number of men were to conduct themselves in such a manner as to prove themselves enemies to man, the pious man's reasons for taking up arms against them would not be of what nation they are, but of what description they are. And woe unto those against whom pious men would fight.

“Having said thus much I conclude, wishing you success in propagating a knowledge and love of the truth: for wisdom in the head, and piety in the heart, are calculated to fit a man for every noble purpose of life in this world, and will make him meet to dwell with saints in glory everlasting.

“Yours, &c.

“A FRIEND TO PIETY.”

Now, friend Beaumont, having made the above remarks, it appears very clear to me, that the prejudice in the religious world against politics, is only against that conduct which induces some to examine the conduct and practices of men in power; and when they see it is wicked and ruinous to conceive it, and expose such men in power to public contempt, and when any religious man meddles with politics for the above purpose, they consider his notions are very hurtful, if not very wicked; and they consider his conduct to be the production of a wicked mind. But when a religious man pays blind, stupid homage, and passive obedience, to men in power, they attribute his conduct to be the production of a pious mind. And I believe it was blind stupid submission and passive obedience to men in power, that the preacher called royalty, respect for dignities, and love of country.

The point at issue between the two parties then appears to be this: the one thinks he has a right, and it is his duty to notice the conduct of men in power, and to speak for or against them, as the case may be. And as the conduct of men in power is almost always bad, it generally happens that such religious men are obliged to write or speak against them.

The other party thinks he has nothing to do with men in power, but to obey them, and reverence and respect them, and pray for them; and for a proof that he is right, he quotes sundry passages from scripture, such as—"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God. Whoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For writers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same; for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

"Wherefore ye must needs be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another fulfilleth the law." *Rom.* xiii. 1—8.

And again. "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this *is* good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." *1 Timothy* ii. and 1—3.

Without entering into an examination of all the above terms and phrases, the substance of the whole is, that it is the will of God that evil doers shall be punished. And the reason is, that men may lead a peaceable, quiet, and honest life. The main question, then, that wants deciding is this: Who has authority to punish evil doers? To answer that question shall be the subject of my next letter, which you may expect very soon; in the mean time I remain

Your sincere friend and well-wisher,

W. A.

## LETTER III.

London, April 20th, 1819.

FRIEND BEAUMONT,

IN my last Letter addressed to you, I promised to answer the following question. "Who has authority or right to punish evil doers?" For it is them the Scripture enjoins us to obey. If we look into the order of beings below man, called the brute creation, we see that if one animal ill useth another, the other punishes it instantly if it be able; it waits for no other authority than its own, and if it is not able it retreats, and the offender goes unpunished, for the rest of the same species seem to take no notice of the matter on this account; they all seek to live with their equals, and as they have all authority and power to redress their wrongs, they, generally speaking, live in peace. This mode of punishment is called the law of nature.

With respect to the order of the beings above man, we know nothing by observation. But the little that is revealed respecting the angels in Heaven, gives us reason to conclude, that God reserves to himself the authority to punish evil doers amongst angels. And that if one angel doeth evil, another angel hath not authority to punish the evil doer, but God sits as king in Heaven. Hence we read in Jude, 6th verse, "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitations, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day."

And again in the 2d of Peter, chapter ii. verse 4: "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment."

Now, as man is but a little lower than the angels, as the Psalmist saith in the 8th Psalm, verses 4 and 5: "What is Man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour." The inference is, that as angels have not the authority to punish each other, neither has man. But that the absolute right and authority to punish evil doers is invested in Almighty God, and that no man has any right to award punishment to another, unless he has derived that right from God Almighty. Hence comes those passages in John's Gospel, chapter xix. verses 10 and 11. "Then said Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power

to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? Jesus answered, thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above."

Now, then, seeing God has delegated his authority to man for the punishment of evil doers, the next question is, What method has God in delegating his authority? and how are the individuals selected? and when did God first delegate his authority?

When Cain killed Abel, God himself punished Cain. What it really was that God did to Cain, we cannot exactly tell; but his punishment was very severe, for it made Cain cry out "My punishment is greater than I can bear." Cain felt himself degraded and unworthy of life, and he thought every one else would think so too, therefore he saith, "Every one that findeth me shall slay me." But the Lord not having given any one authority to punish evil doers, declares, "Whoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him seven fold." And as every one might know that God had punished Cain, "he set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him."

After this it seems as if the Lord left mankind to go on as they would, for a while. For in the 23d verse and 4th chapter of Genesis, we have an account of one Lamech calling his wives together, and makes a confession to them and saith, "I have slain a man to my wounding, and a young man to my hurt." We have no account of God visiting Lamech for this offence. And it seems Lamech knew no one else had any right to interfere, for he saith, "If Cain shall be avenged seven fold, truly Lamech seventy and seven fold."

It all goes to prove, that at that time God had not ordained any powers to punish evil doers; but that he reserved that prerogative to himself. I am of opinion, that he did not ordain any powers to punish evil doers before Noah's flood. And I believe they had no soul but the soul of nature, which teaches every animal self-defence. But if the offender kills the offended, the law of nature doth not teach a third to punish the offender. It appears to me, they had no rule of punishment, but for the stronger to punish the weaker. That they did punish each other is certain from the account that is given of them, that when God looked down from Heaven, he saw, to his astonishment, (speaking after the manner of man) that the "earth was filled with violence." Meaning, no doubt, that the conduct of man was violence one against another, from the child to old age. And not only was man in this state, but the whole of the animal Creation. And when God came to take a full survey of the whole, it grieved him to the heart, to see such confusion on the earth; he therefore made up his mind to destroy them all, except the few he selected to replenish the earth afresh. Therefore, he proceeds to give Noah directions for the building of an ark.

Now, then, I will take it for granted, that before Noah's flood, God had not instituted any authority amongst men for the punish-

ment of evil doers, and as no creature on earth had any authority to punish evil doers, man had become wicked and violent to an extreme. I will now conjecture that God had an intention to establish an authority, that would be quite sufficient to cure the evil that prevailed for want of it. For we should always keep in mind, that God's plans are always perfect, and quite sufficient for the purpose for which they are given.

Now, then, we will leave the old world, and step over the flood. When Noah and his family went out of the ark, God held a conference with them. And, amongst other things, he said, "Who-soever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." This is the first time, then, that we read of God delegating his authority for the punishment of evil doers. Till now he had reserved that authority to himself. Now, suffer me to speak of God, as if he was a finite being. I will conjecture, that when God saw his orders executed upon the old world, when he saw the water had destroyed all living things, (save those in the ark,) he began to think what would be best to be done, for he had destroyed the old race, because they had fallen into so much wickedness, and were so cruelly violent one against another; and as he had selected a few from the old race to replenish the earth afresh, when they came to be numerous they would most likely fall into the same error; and then he might deluge the earth again, and that he did not like to do. Therefore, he concluded the best way to check that violence into which they had before fallen, and to cause men to live in peace, would be to give authority to some creature to punish evil doers individually, and protect the innocent. Now, then, the creature wants selection, that is, to exercise God's authority. Any creature will be sufficient with God's authority, even the most insignificant. But God acts like a noble-minded man in this case; a rich man, that is, mean and little in his mind, thinks himself honourable because he has a set of slaves for his servants. Hence, the proud, haughty, insolent, rich people in our day think themselves more honourable, by having a black servant; because the general notion amongst Europeans is, that blacks are slaves. Because of the traffic that the whites have carried on amongst the blacks, these mean minded, rich people, not contented with the dignity that belongs to them, they want to borrow, and they are so jealous lest they should not monopolize all the honour, that they make their servants wear badges of degradation, and the badges are always something very conspicuous to the public eye. The badge is called livery. This plan is adopted, because it bears a contrast; and contrasts often deceive the public. Set a very tall man and a very short man together, and the tall man will borrow tallness from the shortness of the other, and the short man will borrow shortness from the tallness of the other; and they both appear very different from what they would do separate.

But a noble-minded man would serve himself before he would



be master of a lot of slaves, and he only wishes to appear before the public in a true light. The more honourable his servants are, the higher it raises him as their master, as our Lord said, "The servant is not greater than his lord." So God Almighty, in choosing a creature to bear his authority, chooses the most noble creature on earth,—MAN. The whole passage runs thus: "Who-soever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made he man."

Thus, then, it appears, the time when God first ordained "The powers that be," as the Apostle calleth it, was immediately after Noah and his family left the ark. And the creature God selected to use his authority for the punishment of evil-doers being MAN; the next question is, to what man, or what number of men.

At the time when God delegated his authority to man, there was but four males, and four females. Was it given to Noah during his life, and then to descend to his oldest son? If this had been the case, the oldest son might have been impatient to exercise the authority that would come to him at his father's death. All he would have to do would be, to kill Noah, then the authority to punish evil doers would be in his hands, for his brothers and the four females would have nothing to do with it. And though he himself would be an evil doer for killing his father, yet there was none that had authority but himself, unless God came to punish him as he had done Cain. And in that case, God would be where he started, (as we commonly say) and he would see at once that his plan was a poor one indeed. It is quite ridiculous to suppose that God gave his authority for the punishment of evil doers to any one individual alone; the authority was given to all. All was equally authorized to punish an evil doer.

But how doth God give authority, or communion? Is it by proclamation merely? Or doth he give the party something to read with his seal upon it, as the kings of the earth do what they call letters patent? No; God gives the party commissioned to feel their commission. Hence our wicked clergy, before they are qualified to preach, are obliged to make oath, that they feel God has commissioned them to preach the Gospel, which they call moved by the Holy Ghost to preach the Gospel, and to the cure of souls. All the prophets felt their commission. The Apostle Paul said he was not appointed by man, nor by the will of man, but by Jesus Christ. Saul, after he was anointed king, felt his commission; hence it is written, "And it was so, that when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, God gave him another heart."

Therefore, all that have authority from God to punish evil doers feel their authority; and I believe Noah and his family all felt they had authority from God to punish evil doers, and they had this feeling so forcible, that if any one had killed another, when there were but eight persons, the other six would all have felt it their duty to punish the evil doer. And as they had all authority, so had all their descendants; and that feeling we have against a murderer,

is that same feeling authority, which God has ordained for the punishment of evil doers. It was this feeling that caused Moses to interfere, when he saw injustice done to one of his kinsmen. I believe mankind had not that feeling against evil doers that we have. They had the same reasoning powers. They had the same passions which we call envy, wrath, malice, ill-will, &c. But no one is bound to punish another, from these motives; and as they had no sort of feeling against evil doers when Cain killed Abel, God pronounced vengeance seven fold on any one that might be influenced from such motives to kill Cain.

If we hear of a fellow creature being murdered, though we know nothing of the man; yet how impatient we feel to apprehend the murderer, and bring him to punishment. The feeling we have is that authority which God has ordained for the punishment of evil doers. It is not nature that gives us that feeling; nature only teaches us to stand in our own defence, or in the defence of our little ones. All creatures will do that, but some with greater resolution than others. Now, if God gives authority to any being or beings, there is no creature on earth or in heaven that has a right to deprive that being or beings of such authority, (save God himself) neither has the party authorised any right to give or sell the said authority to any one. There was a man fool enough in the apostles' days to think that God's gifts might be sold, he therefore offered the apostles money for their authority to cast out devils; but the apostle said to him, "Thy money perish with thee! because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money, thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent, therefore, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if, perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity." Therefore, God having given authority to every man for the punishment of evil doers, and as no one can be justly deprived of this authority, neither by his own act nor the act of any other, the inference is, that to this very day the authority to punish evil doers is invested in every one, and no one can claim an exclusive right to the said authority.

But some will, perhaps, say, that this is making it every one's business, and "what is every one's business is no one's." This is an old saying, and with another word put to it would be a true saying; as it is, it contains in itself a contradiction, it wants the word *exclusively* to make it correct, and then it would be, "what is every one's business is no one's exclusively." And I am bold to assert it over again, that no man has an exclusive right to punish evil doers; and to disprove this assertion, would be to prove that God has deprived mankind of this authority, and has given the authority to one only. And if any were to attempt to disprove my assertion, they would fly in the face of all that is excellent and praise-worthy, either in the British constitution or in any other constitution. Doth not one of the maxims or principles of the

British constitution say, that no man can be justly punished but by the laws he has assented to? that is, that law by which a man is punished, is a law the same man has made for the punishment of others; but if the man had no right to punish others for evil-doing, he had no right to make laws.

Again, is it not a rule in our courts of law, that if one man prosecute another, if the defendant can prove that the plaintiff is proceeding against him, from motives of envy, anger, malice, and ill-will, he will defeat the plaintiff? The plaintiff then must be influenced by a different feeling than envy, anger, malice, and ill-will, (for they had these feelings before Noah's flood); yes, he could have no claim to bring his fellow-man into a court of law, but by that authority God had given him for the punishment of evil-doers, and that authority is felt; and if God were to deprive mankind of that authority, and give it to one man, or to a few men, he would take away the feeling, or just motive, which is allowed in courts of law. If that authority were taken from us by God (for none else can take it) we should know no more about "Revenge is sweet," for that revenge that is sweet, is that feeling authority God has given us for the punishment of evil-doers. And when an evil-doer is punished by us, or by our orders, for it matters not to me, if a man injures me, and another punish him by my orders, I am satisfied as well as if I had punished him myself. The officer takes a man by order of the complainant, and the whole proceedings, in fact, are by order of the complainant. Costs of law are only intended to prevent unjust punishment from being inflicted, else the complainant might punish too severely, from motives of malice, &c. or the complainant might be too weak to punish enough. Hence a man is prohibited from sitting to judge a matter that he is concerned in, and the complainant must refer the matter in most cases to unprejudiced minds, that justice may be done, and nothing else but justice; for it all goes to prove that the complainant had a right to redress, which only means a right to punish evil-doers; if we had not that authority, we should do as other animals do; if we were too weak to stand in our defence, we should skulk away, and leave the offender.

I think I have said enough to prove, that the authority to punish evil-doers is given to all men equally, and that no one has any exclusive right more than another.

Yours, &c.

WILLIAM ANDREW.

## LETTER IV.

London, May 5, 1819.

THE next question is, did God give Noah and his family any directions how to put his authority in force? We do not read that he did; but then Noah and his family had what we call common sense for their guide, and that is quite sufficient. Christ has established the fact, that we are all in possession of understanding to guide us aright, if we will but be guided by it, where he saith, "Do unto others, as ye would others should do unto you."

Therefore, God having given all men authority to punish evil-doers; and as God has left man in the exercise of that authority, to be guided by his reasoning powers, no other guide is necessary. But some will say, man's reason is corrupt, and, therefore, not to be depended on. Indeed, when did that happen? When Adam sinned. Well, I will admit that to be true, then, and that the earth is also corrupt, and that the earth's corruption took place at the same time. But, pray, what can all this doctrine of corruption mean? It is the same earth, is it not? I think no one would be fool enough to deny that. What, then, can be meant by the earth being corrupt? I believe the meaning in both cases is exactly the same, and may be comprised in the word weakness. One of the properties of the earth before Adam sinned was most likely a power to produce every thing in its season, and in perfection, without any labour being bestowed on it.

While man was the image of God, and lord of all, the earth, as it were, with cheerfulness and delight, sent forth its fruits for man's use; but when man became a rebel against God the Creator of all things, the earth became shy towards man, and withheld its fruits, as if man, rebel man, were not worthy of support. And the earth became so weak in its prolific powers, as not to be able to bring forth its fruits in its season, and in perfection, unless it is assisted by man. Thus, God ordained, that as man was not worthy of support on account of his rebellion, he should be under the necessity of assisting the earth in bringing forth that which he needed. Therefore, God said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Thus, then, the right way to get a living is to labour for it. But God has not given us directions how much we are to labour, nor in what way we are to perform it; we are left to be guided by our reason in this matter, the same as in politics.

This duty to labour falls upon all men. Thus, God made the burthen perfectly equal, "But man hath found out many inventions." By which means, some have to labour more in one year than God's ordinance would require them to labour in ten; for God is not a bad master, and he has not weakened the prolific powers of the earth so much, but that it will produce bountifully when man applies his labour to it. That system, then, which keeps some from labour all their lives, and imposes a great quantity of labour on others all their lives, is contrary to the ordinance of God. And if mankind in general will not attend to that guide he has left them to be guided by in these things, he will permit them to live in folly and misery.

But to return to the corruption of man's reason. As the earth is the same earth as it was before its corruption, so is man's reason the same reason, and is only weakened. One of the perfections that Adam possessed before his fall was, that he had reasoning powers surprisingly great. So that he could at once comprehend the nature, properties, and use of all things that surrounded him. The case with which he is represented to have given names to all creatures as they passed before him, is a proof that his perception or comprehension was very great. But after his fall, he became weak in his reasoning powers, and it required time, labour, and application of those reasoning powers to be able to understand various matters. Thus it is to this day; the way to obtain good for our bodies, requires the labour and fatigue of our bodies; and the way to obtain a correct understanding of any matter that concerns us, is by the labour and fatigue of our reasoning powers.

But is the corruption (weakness) of man's reason a proper argument, that they should neglect or reject it altogether? No; it is an argument that is as necessary for man to cultivate his mind, (which is only another word for reasoning powers) as it is to cultivate the earth. Yes; because we are weak in our reasoning powers, we should use the greater diligence, zeal, perseverance, and patience in our reasonings about those things that concern us. Away, then, with that doctrine which teaches men not to think about politics, seeing that God has said, politics concern every man, and has left him to be guided by his reason in the discharge of his political duties. How wicked and foolish it must be to teach men that they have nothing to do with politics; that the great and the rich have to manage these matters. Why do not the great and the rich claim the exclusive right to cultivate the earth? If they can relieve us from political duties, that God hath enjoined on us, why not relieve us from the necessity of labour for bread? for they are equally as able to cultivate the earth for us all, as they are to manage political affairs for us all; for God having made it the business of all to labour, he has also made it the business of all to punish evil-doers.

This is the foundation of Universal Suffrage. Universal Suffrage,

then, is ordained of God. One of the wiseacres in the House of Commons, called Major Cartwright's plan for Universal Suffrage a wild scheme. Well, if it is wild, God schemed it, for it is God's scheme. The manner in which certain offenders were to be put to death in the Mosaic law, is a proof that the right to punish crime belonged to the whole people, for the criminal was to be taken outside the city, where there were room for all the people to assemble, that they might all exercise their right to punish evil-doers; all had a right to stone the criminal.

Again: the practice that is used now in England, in most cases, is founded on the same principle, that the right to punish crime belongs to the whole people equally. Public justice means that sort of punishment which the public feel to be right and just. The public executioner means a person employed in behalf of the public to inflict punishment of death on a criminal. And this is done in public view, and is called a public execution, which means the criminal is put to death by the public; and when any one is put to death contrary to public feeling, such death is murder, and is one of the effects of tyranny; and tyranny is the offspring of negligence and carelessness in the public.

The practice of calling a jury together, is another proof that the right to punish crime belongs to the whole people. A jury should be twelve men chosen impartially from the public, and of sane mind, and twelve men thus chosen are thought to be a good representation of the whole public. The form and manner of various proceedings are all founded upon the principle, that the right to punish evil-doers belongs to the whole people. There is very little else left but forms and manner of proceedings. The public, through the deception that has been practised, have lost the power. O, awful consideration! the power is every thing. O what use are forms and names, without the power. It is just like a religion that has nothing but forms and names, without any power. Juries are of very little use for want of power.

Suppose a set of men called borough-mongers make a law that a man shall be put to death for talking to a soldier. A man is detected talking to a soldier, a jury is called to hear the evidence, that they may ascertain whether the man did talk to a soldier. The case is as clear as noon day; all that the jury have to do in the matter is, to say, "We believe the man did talk to a soldier." What a deceitful blind it is to have a jury for such a use as that; why not have taken the man at once, and tied him up by the neck, and made an example of him to the public, and then the proceedings would have been all of a piece? The main question a jury should decide is, how much shall the man be punished. Juries have yet the power they should have, in cases for damage; and that punishment an unprejudiced jury awarded would be just punishment. When any one is made an example to the public, the principle of such proceedings is this; tyranny brings its victim into public view, and inflicts the punishment it awards, and while the

punishment is at work, tyranny points to the victim, and looks at the public, and says, (with a tiger's voice,) "See, ye wretches, how I will serve you, if ye dare to displease me;" then shakes its heavy chains in their face, and, grinning, says, "I'll fasten you, if you disobey my mandates;" the public go home disgusted, full of indignation and slavish fear. But when just punishment is inflicted, the public go home satisfied, and feel as if they had been doing their duty.

Seeing, then, that the power which God has ordained for the punishment of evil-doers is invested in the whole of mankind, we are not called to obey any authority but public authority, and none is public authority but that which the public institute. Obedience to all other power is upon the principle of expedience; just the same sort of obeisance that I would render to a set of thieves that might break into my house, and put me in fear. I would obey them, rather than irritate them, so as to cause them to put me to death; but I should not consider it my duty to obey them. I should not consider it well pleasing to God to pray for the continuance of their unjust and unlawful possession of my person and property. No; I should consider them as evil-doers, and as soon as I saw a chance of success, either to escape from them or secure their persons, I should consider I had authority from God to punish them as evil-doers.

But it often happens, that evil-doers cannot be punished without the united exertions of numbers, and this uniting cannot take place without regulations and rules, which subject one to another, that they may all form one compact body. 'Tis this sort of subjection the apostle means, when he tells us to be subject to the higher powers; that is, every one act in his place like links in a chain; and so far was the apostle from teaching that foolish and ruinous doctrine, that we had no need to think about politics, that he even commanded us to pray to God about it, which is an argument that we should have a great concern on our minds for the right management of political matters, that we might lead a quiet and peaceable life, for the peaceableness of mankind all depends on the right management of political affairs. And as God has made it the business of all, it is absurd to an extreme to think political affairs can be managed by a few. No; not any inventions of men can answer the purpose of God's plans.

All the wars, from Noah's flood to the present time, have arisen from the neglect of mankind in the management of politics, or that authority God has given us for the punishment of evil-doers. And I believe there never will be peace among mankind, till they all earnestly, zealously, and perseveringly attend to the management of that authority. And when that is the case, mankind may safely turn the instruments of cruelty into implements of husbandry, but not till then.

Politics will not fit us for heaven; 'tis not religion; but when that authority which God has established for the punishment of

evil-doers is exercised by all he has given it to, it will be effectual to keep men in peace in this world. God instituted it for that purpose, and so sure as the sun gives light, so sure would man live in peace, by a right application of that authority which God has given to us; but so long as the teachers of religion, and others, can persuade men that they have nothing to do with the management of political matters, and that to meddle with politics is contrary to a religious life, and hurtful to religion, so long as these sentiments prevail generally, so long may all the preparations for war be kept up, for so long will tyranny, despotism, and violence rage amongst mankind. We might as well expect the earth to bring forth its fruits without the labour of man, as expect peace amongst men without the attentions of all to politics. God would as soon permit the labour of a few to be sufficiently productive for the support of the whole, as he would permit the attention of a few in political matters to be productive of peace amongst men.

What peace and unity, what concord and honesty would prevail amongst us, if we had such regulations as would unite the wisdom of the whole as a guide in public matters! Some will say, it is not practicable to collect the opinions of the whole. Why? Do not the present regulations collect the labour of us all? Is not the sweat of our brow collected, even from women and children? And if those stupid, ignorant, foolish, wicked, debauched creatures that have got into power, are able to invent regulations for the collection of our money against our will, how infinitely easier for the public to invent regulations for the collection of our sentiments, which we all should feel proud to bestow? Away, then, with the doctrine of impracticability.

But some will say, there are so many opinions about any thing, that the whole cannot be brought into one mind, and for that reason nothing could be done in public matters, if the public were consulted about it. See what noise and confusion often take place when the public meet. Witness the last election scene. Election scenes indeed! meetings conducted by bribery and drunkenness, for the purpose of corruption. Why point us to these meetings?

As to the noise and debate in free meetings, 'tis nothing but reason that is at work; many things make a noise in their operation, so doth reason in public meetings. 'Tis the various sentiments of the individuals composing the meeting that are at work. The operations in public meetings are exactly the same as the operation in a man's mind. The opposite sentiments that rise up in a meeting are just like a man's mind when he is cogitating what way to take, or what to do. What do we mean when we say we are in twenty minds whether to do this, that, and the other? We mean, there are twenty opinions in our minds about the matter; and the various ideas we have about it rise up in our minds, one against the other, till at last some one idea prevails, and swallows up all the rest. There is a kind of a vote in our minds when we come to a



conclusion ; so it is in a public meeting, and so it always will be ; and it is the best way of bringing reason to perfection to put it frequently in motion. See how dull a man is at collecting the ideas of his mind who seldom practises it. So are mankind when they meet together to discuss any matter ; they find as much difficulty for want of frequent practice, as a man doth in his mind. By frequently assembling together, public meetings would become so apt and ready at uniting their sentiments into one, that it would seldom require more than a few minutes on one topic, and the commonness of the practice would take away the novelty, and hurry and bustle that now take place when meetings are convened to discuss political subjects. Therefore, all the arguments that are used against the public engaging in the management of public affairs are absurdity in themselves. It is as absurd as to argue that the owner of a concern has no business with the management of it, but ought to leave it to hirelings entirely.

But, methinks, some person will here want to put in his opinion, and ask me, if politics be a matter that all ought to attend to, why did not Christ and the apostles teach politics ? Why ? you fool, why did not Christ teach us carpentering ? Why did not Paul teach us tent-building ? Why did not Peter teach us fishing, and net-mending ? Why not teach us the various callings necessary for man to attend to ? Why not teach us agriculture, and especially as these things require more of our time and attention than any other thing that concerns us ? Why, because common sense teaches us these things ; and there is an argument in our breasts that convinceth us at once, that it is necessary for us to attend to such things, and to use our reasoning powers in the discharge of these duties. So it is with politics ; Christ and the apostles had no need to teach us politics, because common sense is sufficient. It was this that caused the Jews to reject Christ, because he did not come to teach politics, and work a political deliverance for them. People, to this day, are often looking for this, that, and the other, to help them, instead of looking within themselves, to see whether they do not themselves possess a power quite sufficient, if properly applied. If they have the means, God will never go out of his common providence to deliver them ; he will let us suffer on, if we have the means within ourselves, and neglect to use them. A pretty thing for the Jews to expect, that he that was rich in glory, and in the possession of divine honour, should become poor and degraded, and be held in contempt in this world, in order that they might be made rich, honourable, and great in their political condition ; when common sense was quite sufficient to raise them to all the enjoyment and greatness that belongs to politics. That sort of riches which Christ abandoned when he became poor, were the same sort of riches that the poor were to be put in a condition to obtain. Therefore, if the riches, honour, and greatness that Christ abandoned were not of a political nature, neither were the riches, honour, and greatness

which Christ came to put us in a condition to obtain, of a political nature. Christ's meaning was purely religious. Religion means, for man to hold fellowship and communion with God. And man being lost as to that matter in all respects, it was that sort of loss that Christ came to restore, and for this purpose was the apostles sent forth. And the whole business of religion to this day is, to restore man to that condition which makes him an associate with God; just the same as two friends meeting, and taking hold of each other's hand, and smiling in each other's face. This smile from God to man, is a something the man feels, which the scriptures call, "joy unspeakable,"—"a peace that passeth understanding." Religion finds man afraid and ashamed of God, as Adam was when he hid himself amongst the trees. The work of religion is to remove this fear and shame from man's mind, and induce him to draw near to God, and be at peace. All that teachers of religion can do in the business is, to reason with man about his fear and shame that he feels, and take hold of his hand, as it were, and lead him to that union with God, that he himself knows to be real by experience.

What, then, can be more sublime than religion? The general notions that we have of God, are, I believe, that he is impartial; therefore, none are necessarily excluded from that communion with him, which religion is intended to effect; and as God is impartial, it teaches us that none can lord over another. But as the apostle saith, "Let each esteem others better than themselves; let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." If there is no God, religion, of course, is a delusion; but even in that case, it is no injury to man, but a good, for it teaches goodwill one to another, inasmuch as it makes all equal, and doth not warrant, in the smallest degree, for one man to injure another, or claim the smallest superiority over any one. No; that religion which Christ and his apostles were engaged in, is in unison with that system of politics which God has ordained for the punishment of evil-doers; for, in either case, no one has the smallest claim exclusively to superiority over another. Individuals may have particular gifts or qualifications immediately from God, at particular periods, when God thinks fit, for particular purposes amongst men. But these gifts and qualifications never extend to the exclusion of any from the common privilege to which they were before entitled. This assertion is proved, by the manner that was observed when Saul was made king over Israel. The poorest had an equal claim with the richest to be king; the man that held no office had an equal claim with him that was judge amongst them, to be king: all was equal in right, no one more than another. And the proceeding being founded upon this principle, they were as impartial as it were possible to invent. Being determined to have a king, at the hazard of God's displeasure, and against the remonstrance of Samueel, the tribes all assembled, and cast lots which tribe the king should be chosen out

of. The tribe being selected, the next they cast lots which family of that tribe; and having selected the family, I believe they then took the names of the males sane in mind, and not infants, in that family: they then cast lots which individual of that family should be king. The lot fell on a tall young man; he was not present at the time; the Scriptures say he was amongst the "stuff." After this impartial selection, God gave him a particular gift for carrying on war against the enemies of Israel. And, indeed, that was all the Israelites wanted a king for, to carry on war. And I believe kings have never been of any other use, either before or since that time, but to carry on war. And when mankind are tired of wars, they only need to be without kings, and they will find it almost impossible to carry on war against each other. For I am convinced in my mind, that there will never be lasting peace where there are kings, unless we could find a race of Solomons to make kings of; for he was king, and did not carry on any war, for which he is said to be the wisest man that ever lived.

But methinks the parson is at me again, and wants to puzzle me, by saying there is a passage in Isaiah, that saith, "Kings shall become nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers;" and that this nursing means true religion, and that they will be fully engaged in religion, and that this prophecy is in part fulfilled already; for the Prayer-Book, and the people in churches and chapels every Sunday, tell us, that the king of England is "our most religious sovereign!"

Aye, aye, Mr. Parson, the scriptures speak of wonderful things indeed! Let me tell you of a passage of scripture, for I am not altogether unacquainted with scripture; the same prophet saith, "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf, and the young lion, and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them; the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den."

Now, Sir, what are we to understand by these representations? I believe it is as possible for kings and religion to be united, as it is for these opposite animals to be united. I believe the leopard must lose his leopardship, and the lion his lionship, before they can associate with lambs and calves. I also believe that kings must lose their kingships before they can be of any good in religion. But I had better not say too much about kings, lest some one should hear me; for kings do not like to be known, nor never did; they only like to be believed and obeyed.

W. A.

## LETTER V.

May 24, 1819.

BUT to return to the subject, that God never gives qualifications or gifts to some individuals to the exclusion of others. As a second proof of this, we have Christ's conduct on one occasion; when one of the company wanted him to officiate as a judge, or ruler, to divide some inheritance between him and his brothers. But Christ knowing he had no communion from God respecting such matters, to the execution of any other man; and as a man he knew he had no right to interfere in behalf of the public, without public appointment, therefore he saith to the man, "Who made me a judge, or a divider, over you?" Neither do religion free us from the obligations that respect this life. We may be as religious as we will, but it will not secure us food without we labour. Neither will religion secure us political peace and happiness, unless we attend to politics. Christ paid tribute, which was a political transaction. The apostle saith, "For this cause pay ye tribute also;" meaning, no doubt, that it is our duty to attend to politics; for he adds, "that ye may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." If religion freed us from attending to politics, it would free us from paying; for paying is the very soul of the argument, that we ought to attend to politics.

I work a week, and produce corn; the king comes, and wants a peck of it. "Well, king, what do you want?"—"Some of this corn."—"For what?"—"For the protection you have from me."—"Protection, king, am I protected by you?"—"Yes."—"Pray, who protects you?"—"Why you, farmer."—"Well, then, is not my protection of you worth as much as your protection of me?"—"Yes, it is."—"Why do you want my corn, then?"—"Why, because I am a king."—"Yes, I know you are king, but I helped to make you one; and I recollect, that when we made you king, we thought that by so doing we all might live in greater safety, and we agreed to give you corn in lieu of your performance of certain duties; but we required you to give us an account of your transactions in our behalf, and that you should not have any of our corn without our consent; this is one of the conditions on which you are king; and if you do not choose to tell me what you want this corn for, you shall not have it, unless you take it by

force. And if you take it by force, I shall consider you a thief, and the first opportunity I shall treat you accordingly; for I never gave up my right of knowing and approving of your transactions before I supported you."

Now, in this case, my enquiry about politics arose on account of having to pay some corn; and the British constitution authorises such enquiry, and gives me authority to withhold payment of taxes, unless my assent has been obtained by the king; and the giving of my assent supposes I know all about the matter for which the tax is wanted, and approve of it. The practice of collecting taxes is as opposite to this principle of the British constitution as light is to darkness.

Again, there is another consideration which proves that religion does not free us from attending to politics, but that it lays upon us a double obligation to attend to them. If we be not religious, we must pay towards supporting political regulations, and that act itself demands of us to know what it is we help to support; if we neglect this, we do not act like men, and are not deserving of rational powers; if we be religious, we have to pay; but in addition to that, we have to pray for the support of political institutions. This latter is of far more importance than the former; the most important part of the former is effected by the labour of our hands. But the latter (praying) requires our whole soul to be engaged in behalf of politics; in the former case, as men, our mental powers only need to be engaged, so far as to ascertain whether the political transactions we support are agreeable to our notions of right and wrong, and to our interest. But, in the latter case, we must consider further than that, for we must consider whether the political transactions we are so heartily engaged in, as to make it a matter of prayer, are agreeable to the will of God; for if we ask his blessing on what he hates we cannot expect to succeed. Nay, further, if we have reason to think he hates the political institutions that we are praying for him to support and preserve, we are wicked, and our prayers are an abomination to the Lord; and if we pray for God's blessing on the political institutions of our nation, without knowing what they are, whether they are good or bad, right or wrong, what doth our praying amount to? Nothing but noise. And if a mechanic could invent a machine to articulate, and set it to work by a steam-engine, there would be as much devotion and divine worship in its performance, as in the performance of a congregation that is engaged in praying for God's blessing upon institutions that they neither understand, nor have any real desire to know. O that I could but go into churches and chapels without seeing and hearing so much of this steam-engine sort of performance!

And again, as the prayers for kings and magistrates, and men in authority, are understood to mean public prayer, that is another proof that the public ought to attend to politics, and the religious

public especially. But methinks some one will say, this is no proof at all; for kings and magistrates, and men in authority, are appointed to manage politics, and they are quite sufficient. Indeed! pray who appointed them? Methinks he saith he doth not know. O, you do not know, don't you? It may be the d---l, then, for any thing you know; away with you, and let me go on with my argument. And in order to convince the religious world, that public prayers are a proof that the public ought to attend to politics, and especially the religious public, I will ask them, what they would think of a society of men that assembled together, and kneeled down before Almighty God, and with fervency and zeal prayed for God to preserve and prosper the apostle Paul, and others engaged in and appointed to propagate religion; and suppose the apostle Paul, and others engaged under him, were represented in their prayers, as persons they highly admired for their zeal, industry, and perseverance; and suppose when the meeting was over, I were to ask one of them that had seemed forward in prayer, how is religion getting on, friend? He looks at me shily, seems astonished that I should think he were so foolish as to have any thing to do with religion; and, rather angrily, saith, "I know nothing about religion! It is not my business to enquire about religion! It is Paul, and them that have that business in hand."—"Indeed! Who is Paul, and the others, and what are they doing?"—"I do not know any thing about them, nor what they are doing; I never bother my head, nor waste my time about those things."—"Dear me! I thought by your praying with them, that you knew all about them, and what they were doing, and were highly pleased with their conduct, and anxious for their prosperity. Pray, on what account was it that you prayed so much about the matter?"—" 'Tis a custom, and according to our rules and ceremonies."

Now, what would any man, accustomed to use his reasoning powers, think of such blockhead-sort of performances as above represented? I call it blockhead-sort of performance, because wooden heads would do, if they could speak; for when rules and ceremonies go any further than the regulation of religious performances, they do away with the use of rules and reasoning powers; and if I were going to write respecting the propriety or impropriety of the use of what is called the Common Prayer-Book, one of my arguments against the use of it would be, that it was an invention that saved the people that used it the trouble of thinking. Any thing that is invented to save people from working, and thinking, is frequently adopted, without considering whether it will be beneficial in all respects. God has decreed that man shall labour both with his body and mind; but though he hath thus decreed, he hath so ordered things, that the performance of these two duties shall be conducive to man's health, strength, and happiness, provided these duties are regulated by moderation.

Thus, by applying our bodies to useful and moderate labour, we increase in bodily health and strength, and by employing our minds on those subjects that it is our duty to attend to, we get strong in our reasoning powers, and, consequently, enjoy greater mental happiness. Therefore, any thing invented to assist the body or mind of man, in the performance of these duties, is a benefit to us. But any thing invented as a substitute, either for bodily or mental labour, is an injury.

But to return to the subject, which is, that religious people lie under a double obligation to attend to politics; for if our prayers for the ministers of the Gospel should arise from our own knowledge of religion, and from our hasty co-operation in the propagation of its doctrines, and benefit to others, we ought to be well acquainted with the offices and labours of any particular individual engaged in the work of religion, before we presume to recommend him to the notice of God.---Why not act thus consistently in politics? Why not be well acquainted with the office, labours, works, and the whole proceedings of kings, magistrates, and men in authority, before we presume to recommend them in an especial manner to the notice of God? And if to induce us to love, honour, and obey God, the preachers tell us, who God is, what he is, and what he is to us, what he has done for us, and what he is doing for us, and what he has promised to do for us, and what he is able to do for us; if they thus endeavour to make it plain to our reason, that it is our duty, as well as our interest, to love, honour, and obey God, why not act thus consistently, when they tell us to love, honour, and obey the king? Why not tell us who the king is, how he came to be king, what he is king for, what he doth for us, and what he is able to do for us? Why not thus appeal to our reason, that we may see the reasonableness of the injunction, to love, honour, and obey the king; that we may practise that precept of the apostle, where he saith, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good?" And if an outward attention to forms and ceremonies in religion, without the spirit and principle of religion in the mind, be detestable, because it is vain, why is it not equally detestable to observe certain forms and ceremonies connected with politics, without either the spirit or principle of the performance in our minds?

It all goes to prove, that the authority which God has ordained for the punishment of evil-doers is given to all; and that when people become religious, they lie under a double obligation to attend to the faithful discharge of so important a duty; and that instead of religion freeing them from the consideration of politics, they are commanded to make the consideration of politics a part of their worship before God. "I exhort, therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men, for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all goodness and honesty."—1 *Tim.* ii. 1.

I think I have said sufficient to prove, that the authority which God has ordained for the punishment of evil-doers, is given to all men; that the use or abuse of that authority is left to the management of the public at large; and that those powers of reasoning which are common to all, and which may be termed common sense, are a sufficient guide; and as we are to be guided by common sense in punishing evil-doers, let us next consider what is evil-doing.

W. A.



## LETTER VI.

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London, June 4th, 1819.

SEEING, then, who it is that have authority to punish evil-doers—first, God ; secondly, the public,—I will, in the next place, consider what is evil-doing.

And where shall I look for an answer to this important question, What is evil-doing ? If I look into history, I find no answer ; if I look into the criminal code of laws, now in force in England, or some other nation, I find no satisfactory answer ; for when we compare ancient with modern law, ancient with modern history, we can scarcely find any thing considered a crime at one time, but what has been considered a virtue at another time. O, what doth the apostle mean when he saith, “ If thou doest well, thou shalt have praise of the same ; but if thou doest evil, be afraid ? ” for he is there speaking of political well-doing, and evil-doing. If he means disobedience to the laws, or to men in power, Lord have mercy on us ! for we can scarcely speak, or act, or eat, or drink, or put on raiment, but we are in very great danger of doing evil. And in these enlightened days the danger increases rapidly. And though there is very great exertion to qualify the rising generation for obedience, yet I believe the rising generation will not be able to obey the men in power, unless the burden of obedience is lightened. And only think of the wonderfully great exertions that are now in use to teach the people at large obedience to the men in power, the vast number of chapels that have been built of late years, and most of the pulpits in chapels are employed to teach obedience to men in power. Then there are the churches, old and new, (and more new churches building) the pulpits of which are, for the most part, employed for the same purpose. And some say there are about three hundred newspapers ; some daily, some weekly, and some otherwise, all sent forth into the nation, and into most of the public-houses, to teach obedience to men in power. And after all this vast expence and labour to teach us obedience, we are scarcely able to learn what is evil-doing ; for the requirement to obedience is so vastly extensive, that we may say, as Christ did, “ They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders ; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.”

I committed a fault one day very innocently, if there be such a thing as an innocent fault : for we having a great deal of darkness on our stairs leading into the cellar, I thought I would let some of the darkness out. I therefore knocked a hole through the wall,

large enough to put my arm through; and though this hole was level with the ground outside, yet the tax-gatherer found it. And he said I had made it to let the light in, and he reckoned himself a capital judge in these matters; and though I had really made the hole to let some of the darkness out, yet he would have his way, and he charged me about sixteen shillings for the light that had got in at the hole, and sixteen shillings for the light that would get in; and he would not be at any trouble to keep the light out neither. I was, therefore, obliged to close the hole up, and pay twice sixteen shillings. And that was not all; the greatest fault was making the hole without giving notice of the same to the tax-gatherer. The punishment for this crime is very severe, but through the abundant mercy of tax-gatherers, I was respited during pleasure from so severe a punishment, and he was also kind enough to tell me, if I made the hole up, I must give him notice in **WRITING**, or else he would make me pay for the light after I had closed the hole up. He also discovered other places about the premises where the light got in, which had never been discovered before by tax-gatherers. The light had gone in at the same places years and years, and for the light that had gone in at these odd places, that had not been noticed before, he made me pay four pounds ten shillings.

Therefore, if we ask the men in power in England what is evil-doing, they will tell us that to let light into a dark place in our houses, without giving notice, is evil-doing. To make a candle, or a bit of soap; or prepare barley for brewing; or pluck a few hops, that may happen to grow in our garden hedge; or make a little salt;—to do any of these things, without giving due notice, is evil-doing. To talk to a soldier in a certain way, to stop at a public meeting more than an hour after orders to disperse, are such enormous crimes, they tell us, as to deserve **DEATH**.

But it is not possible for me to enumerate the various actions that they call evil-doing. They may, for any thing I know, be more in number than the hairs of my head. What shall I say, then? Are they the proper authority to say what is evil-doing, or are they not? If they be not the proper authority, willing obedience to them is a crime, for obedience to the devil is on the same principle. If we do obey an improper authority, it should be on the same principle as obedience to a gang of thieves. It may be expedient to obey thieves for a time, but it can never be a duty. But as God has given us authority to punish evil-doers, it is a duty that involves on us to bring the said thieves that we have obeyed to punishment, the first opportunity; and if we neglect that, God will either punish us, or permit the thieves to punish us. Therefore, obedience to an improper authority is not well-doing, consequently, we cannot have what the apostle calls, "praise of the same."

If they be the proper authority to say what is evil-doing, then obedience to them will produce in us what the apostle calls

“praise;” for he saith we shall have it; that is, he means we shall feel delight and gladness in our minds. And this definition is as true as the Gospel. It always was, and always will be the case, that when we yield obedience to a proper authority, the act of obedience will create in our minds a kind of delight and pleasure. This is that which makes “wisdom’s ways the ways of pleasantness;” and disobedience to a proper authority always creates in our minds a contrary feeling, which the apostle calls “fear,” (unless we are very callous indeed) and that is the reason why the prophet declares “there is no peace to the wicked.” Therefore, we need not be at a loss to know whether they be the proper authority; we only need to consult our feeling; and if by obeying them, we feel delight and pleasure in our minds, and if disobedience creates a contrary feeling, then we may be sure they are the proper authority. Hence I would advise every one to decide the matter for himself, whether he ought to obey, or not, the men in power. God knows how I feel sometimes, when I am obeying them, and he knows how I feel when I have an opportunity to disobey them without being found out.

We ought to be very careful to find out who it is that has authority to say what is evil-doing. And we may depend upon one thing as a truth, that never changes, which is, that it is as easy for a proper authority to make its command known, as it is to command. Be sure to keep that in mind. And whenever laws are made by any authority that has not the means of making their commands known, exactly to the extent they require obedience, so that not one individual remains ignorant, it is a substantial proof that they are not a proper authority to command; and the commanded are always allowed to remain passive, till the command comes to their knowledge; so that it is not the business of the commanded, but the commanding, to make known their commands. And when any one is punished for disobedience to any authority, before that authority made known its commands to the individual punished, and that too before he committed the offence, it would be a proof that they had not proper authority to command; consequently, the punishment must be unjust.

What is the inference, then? Have the men in power in England the means of making their commands known to every individual that they require obedience from? Is it as easy for them to make known their commands as it is to command, without any hazard to the contrary? If there be any hazard in making their commands known to every individual they require obedience from, it is a proof they have not proper authority to command.

I must leave it for every one to judge for himself in this matter, whether the men in power have proper authority, or not, to say what is evil-doing. As for my own part, my reason and my feelings speak one and the same thing respecting them. I might mention other criteria, such as if greater obedience is required than those required are able to perform, it is a proof that the require-

ment comes from an improper authority. But as I have no confidence whatever in what the men in power may say respecting what is evil-doing, I will therefore look to some other authority for an answer to my question of "What is evil-doing." And without losing any more time by searching in vain for an answer, I will describe who it is that has authority to say what is evil-doing. Whoever has authority to punish, hath likewise authority to command, and exactly to the same extent; hence parents have authority to punish and command their children to a certain extent. Masters have a right to punish and command their servants to a certain extent. And as I have already proved, nay, demonstrated, that none but God and the public have authority to punish evil-doers; so, likewise, none but God and the public have any right to say what is evil-doing. And whatever God saith is evil-doing, he hath made it known to us; for, as I said above, it is as easy for a proper authority to make known its commands, as it is to command. So it is with God: the way he hath taken to make his commands known is a very sure and safe way, for he hath given us to feel what is evil-doing, so far as he has thought proper to describe it; so that none can plead ignorance; for they are what we commonly call crimes against natural justice. But as God has given the public authority to punish crime, the public hath also authority to say what is evil-doing. And whatever the public agree to call evil-doing, it is evil-doing to any of that public. And it is as easy for the public to make known its command, as it is for the public to command. Obedience to God and the public would create that pleasant feeling in our minds which the apostle calls "praise." But as the people of England have neglected to punish evil-doers, they have also neglected to say what is evil-doing; therefore, I can only find an answer to my question so far as God has described it, and that answer is in our feeling. But, O, how glad should I be to have an answer from the other authority, the public; **FOR THE WILL OF THE WHOLE IS THE STANDARD OF TRUTH.** O what happy lives should we live, if we had a public will to obey, for obedience to God and the public, would create in our minds a pleasure; while disobedience would create a fear, a tormenting fear, and evil-doers would seldom escape punishment; and if the evil-doer escaped punishment on account of his crimes being secret, that is, when both the act of crime, and the damage done, is no secret as for the public not to know, such cases God has engaged to attend to. Thus, the scriptures say, "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

W. A.

## LETTER VII.

London, June 10th, 1819.

**PUNISHMENT.** What shall I say upon the word punishment? How much punishment shall be inflicted for evil-doing? Who shall answer that? This is the most important question. The other two questions are nothing compared with this. It would not matter who it was that had authority to punish, or who it were that described evil-doing, if there were no punishment to be inflicted. It is the punishment that makes all important; and as this is the most important question, no answer to the question should be acted upon, unless that answer comes from the proper authority. And as none but God and the public have authority to command, how can less authority describe the quantity of punishment to be inflicted? We have God's answer to this question clear and plain as the other. But, O, what dreadful work here is now going on in England, for want of the public's answer to the question. That quantity of punishment which God has taught, or ordered to be inflicted, is, generally speaking, what we call tit for tat; that is, life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, house for house, burning for burning, &c.

When just punishment is inflicted, it is satisfaction to the injured, and generally has a very salutary effect on the evil-doer. But when unjust punishment is inflicted, either too much or too little, it is not satisfaction, if a man were to murder one of my children, and then be flogged at a cart's tail awhile, and then set off; neither me nor the public would be satisfied; and if another man were to pay me a bad one pound note, and then be hanged for the offence, neither me nor the public would be satisfied. Our minds would not be unloaded of the burdens of punishment due to the murderer, and our feelings would be filled with horror and disgust against the authority that had inflicted the punishment of death for so trifling an offence; and I should be ashamed ever after to think that a fellow-creature had been put to a disgraceful death for defrauding me of so trifling a sum, and that authority which values a man's life so low as twenty shillings, must be something worse than the very devil himself; and if some of our fellow-creatures are unjustly and disgracefully put to death, through the mismanagement of public affairs, and if the mismanagement is occasioned through neglect of the public to manage their affairs, what a hellish doctrine must that be that teaches any individual to neglect the public affairs: that is, what I mean by

the word politics. If the word politics means the management of the public, I have done wrong to use it all the way through, for that definition would exclude the public from having any thing to do with politics, because they are the object to be managed, and an attention to politics would belong to the managers only. This would be dividing mankind into two parts; one the manager, and the other the managed; and the whole management would devolve upon the manager. And it would be as easy to set a horse to manage horses, as it would be to employ any one of the public to manage the public. And can one horse manage and govern a number of other horses? No; neither would the number submit to the one; for though they have not what we call reason, they act with more reason than those men that believe they have nothing to do with politics, or teach others they have nothing to do with them; for they act as if God had ordained one part of mankind to be managed, and another part to manage; and all my arguments prove, that God has not ordained any such order; all nature speaks aloud to the contrary.

Politics, therefore, must mean the public management of affairs, or, in other words, the management of the public's affairs. This definition is the true one, for it makes the public the managers, and the affairs the managed; and I defy all the big-wigged, and pig-tailed gentlemen in the kingdom, to prove the public is not the proper manager. Those that teach any individual to neglect politics, teach neglect; and if some of our fellow-creatures, are unjustly punished, and put to death through mismanagement of the affairs of the public, they that teach and practice neglect are the cause of missing to manage, which means neglecting to manage. If the whole of the public are the managers, a part can but manage in part. For instance, if the whole consists of one million of individuals, and one half were to neglect their share of management, the other half could but manage. To suppose they could manage as well as the whole, would be as ridiculous as to say, half a loaf is as well as a whole one, in a family that has got stomachs capacious enough to require a whole one. We know half a loaf is better than none; and if God thought proper, he could contract the stomachs of a family so much as to cause half a loaf to answer as well as a whole one did before; and he would as soon do that, as he would cause half the public to manage as well as the whole. If half, then, of the public, could not manage so well as the whole, what must we think of the system of management which is not one hundredth part of the whole to manage it? Can that small part do any good in management? No; better have no politics at all, than for a few to attempt to manage for the whole.

What a cursed, cursed doctrine, then, must that be, which teaches any one to neglect politics, seeing that no less a number than the whole public is sufficient to manage politics aright. And the reason is, that God hath placed the management of politics in the hands of the whole. And all the devils in hell,

and all the rich men on earth to help them, cannot make that right, which God has made wrong. And any thing is wrong which comes short of that which God has made right.

Is it any wonder, then, that unjust punishment is inflicted? Is it any wonder that crime, wickedness, oppression, injustice, and violence, are as common as sun-shine? No; no wonder at all, seeing that that order which God ordained after the flood for the prevention of crime and violence has, generally speaking, been neglected. And God might now look down from heaven, and declare, as he did before the flood, that the wickedness of man is great, and that violence lowereth the earth. And though Europe may be said to be at peace at present, in one sense, yet what doth the scene bespeak, if a person were up in the air, and could view all Europe, see the hundreds and thousands of men marched and marshalled about with guns and bayonets, and swords and pistols, and spears and battle-axes, and cannon and horses, all in their train? Good God! what would the beholder say, but that Europe is full of violence? When will this violence cease, when will these instruments of cruelty be beaten into implements of husbandry? Not until that order is attended to which God has ordained, which is for the whole public to manage politics, and not before.

O ye cursed fools, then, that are teaching any one not to meddle with politics! O ye cursed fools, that are persecuting the best of men, for meddling with politics! are ye not as bad as the Roman Catholics ever were, when they were persecuting and ill-treating the best of men for meddling with the scriptures. Is the world never to be at rest through your cursed doctrine; shame of ye, shame of ye. Away with you. I feel too much indignation in my mind, to treat so contemptuous and ridiculous a doctrine with soft language.

How long shall one class of enormous evil-doers go unpunished, and another class of small offenders be most cruelly punished? How long shall injustice stare us in the face, at noon-day? How long shall all manner of iniquity abound, before we, as a public, or as a nation, are wise enough to know the cause? The sole cause is the public's neglect to manage politics. And it is as easy for the nation to remove the cause, as it is for God to do any thing: he has only to will it, and the thing is done. So it is with the nation; it has only to will that it will no longer neglect, and all the evil and mischief flies before it. The public will, is something like the will of God, it is, as I said before, the standard of truth: and none but God and the public can decide what is right and what is wrong. **THE WILL OF THE PUBLIC IS THE SOVEREIGN POWER**, and like God himself, it can do no wrong. And is the standard of truth to be destroyed! And is the sovereign power to be destroyed! And are a fictitious standard of truth, and a fictitious sovereign power, to be substituted in their stead, through that hellish doctrine that teaches men to neglect politics?

## LETTER VIII.

June 17th, 1819.

METHINKS some stupid person or other will want to ask me of what use are kings then, if the whole public should manage politics. Aye, aye, stupid fellow, I am not careful to answer thee in that matter at present; the Attorney General is in my way, for part of his business is to keep people from talking and writing all they would about kings. And as the Attorney General is so dreadfully powerful, and me so despicably weak, it would be folly to fall into his claws. A poor man at Manchester, a little time since, printed something about kings, in a newspaper, for which the Attorney General has raised his heavy sword, and if he can find twelve men to say strike, he will cut the man down. But I will tell thee what; stupid, if thou wilt go with me to America, I will there tell thee all I can about kings, although they have an Attorney General there, yet he has got no king to take care of. But I think I may venture to tell thee what use kings should be of, and leave it for thee to find out, by thine own sharpness, what use they are of.

The first and great concern in politics should be the collection of the people's WILL into one focus. None should be excluded from throwing his will into the common stock, that is not excluded from the observance of the public will. The collecting and the acting of the public's will would require rules and regulations, and rules would create superiors and inferiors, as it respects official character, but not in any other sense whatever. If the people's will were collected into one focus, till at last it centered in one man, that one man in himself, in his private capacity, would be no more than any other man: but in his official capacity, he would be the sovereign power. To speak and to act the public WILL, would be the whole of his work; if he neglected that, he would deserve to be beaten with many stripes.

But what would he deserve if he did contrary to his master's (the public's) will? The public's will, is the sovereign power, and if we give the agent the same name as the principal, as we frequently do in many things, it can only be proper so far as the agent is acting the part of the principal. The king then, being agent of the sovereign power, (the public's will,) could do no wrong, so far as he was guided by the principal. No, it would be as easy for God himself to go wrong, as the sovereign power, (the public's will,) for the public's will is the standard of truth, next unto God.

Where the public is numerous it would require many subordi-



nate offices under the king, as sovereign ; but they should all keep it in mind, that it is the public's will that they are acting under and for, and not the person of the king.

With such a king then, and men in authority under him, as above described, I would say with the Apostle Peter, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme: or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well; for so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: as FREE, and not using your LIBERTY for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour ALL MEN, love the brotherhood, fear God, honour the king."

Thus, then, my answer respecting what use a king shall be of is, that the king should speak and act the public's will.

The people's will, should be collected every year at farthest, for this reason, in a nation there are thousands of individuals arrive at manhood in one year, who were considered infants the year before. And if the sovereign power is the will of the whole, when a part of the whole is excluded, part of the sovereign power is destroyed.

And when we consider the shortness of human life, and the ravages death makes in a public in a few years, one year's neglect is no small blow to the sovereign power, and moreover, it is the public's will for the time being, that is the sovereign power; not the public's will that is past, but always the present. The collection of the public's will is the seed-time of politics, and when seed-time is neglected, all we can expect is a crop of weeds; and as the seed-time of politics has been neglected so long, it is no wonder that we have not one good grain of sense produced in the management of politics.

Whenever the communication between the principal and the agent is cut off, or neglected, the agent is useless: and wherever the public's will is neglected, the agent of that will is a useless thing. Therefore, any proposition or practice, that has a tendency to weaken the sovereign's power, should be looked upon with contempt, and guarded against as a monstrous evil; but any proposition or practice that has a tendency to strengthen the sovereign power, by a more effectual collection of the people's will, should be always immediately attended to; and any improvement in that respect should be considered a great blessing, and the person or persons making the improvement, deserving well of their country. But instead of the people's will, being considered the sovereign power of the nation, lack-a-day for us! it is a man, a poor worm of the earth, whose breath is in his nostrils. Law after law is made to protect his person. While the sovereign power (the people's will) lies prostrate, even at the feet of his servant! Sometimes a little of the sovereign power (the people's will) attempts to approach the chair of state, but it is frequently swept away by the Commons' sweepèr. O, how long shall we "see the abomination

of desolation in the place where it ought not?" How long will it be, ere the sovereign power of the nation riseth to sit in the chair of state, and lay hold of the helm that steers us? We have a king, but where is the public's will? We have men in authority, but where is the sovereign power? Would it not be as reasonable to teach people to neglect religion, and then tell them they were christians, as to teach them to neglect politics, and then tell them they are loyal? Would it not be as reasonable to expect that a parson could (if we paid him) manage religion for us, and in our stead, as to expect that a king could (if we paid him) manage politics for us, and in our stead? Yes; and God would grant the one as soon as the other. What a monstrous absurd doctrine it is, then, that teaches men to neglect politics!

Some good honest hearted men, but not rightly informed, that I have conversed with, when they could find no answer against my argument, that all men ought to attend to politics, have exclaimed, "Aye, man needs but little, and that little not long. If I can but get a little food, and that for a little while, I shall not need it long. And I can do no good in politics. The best thing I can do in this world will be to get well out of it!"

I grant the last sentence may be correct, if we may be allowed to pick and choose one thing from amongst others, and say which is the best. To get well out of the world may be the best; for I have heard people say, ever since I was a boy, that all is well that ends well. But the notion that people have that they can do no good in politics, is as erroneous as the devil could wish to invent, if God has placed the management of politics in the hands of the whole. When we hear a man say he could do no good in politics, we might, with very great propriety, tell him, that if all the people attempted to manage politics, without him they would be deficient, on account of not having his help. His neglect would, in some measure, spoil the whole. And besides, when a man saith he can do no good in politics, it is making God a fool for placing the management of politics in the hands of the whole, and by so doing requiring their attention. It is just the same sort of reasoning as is described in the parable that Christ spoke respecting the talents. The man that hid his talent, thought he could do no good with it; and he was a good sort of a man too; for he not only thought he could do no good, but that if he attempted to do any thing, he should do mischief; that is, waste his talent, and he had too much goodness in him to have any desire to do mischief; he, therefore, hid his talent. And as he was a good sort of a man, in as much as he did not wish to do any mischief, he came to the reckoning as bold as any of the rest, and addressed his lord:—"Here is the talent thou gavest me; I have not wasted it; I have done no mischief with it; and as for any good, I never thought I could do any good. I knew you were a bad man, bothering people to do what they could not, expecting to reap where you had never sown, and to gather where you had never strowed. And I con-

cluded I should have no chance with such a man as you, who want more than you gave, if I come with less; I therefore took good care of the talent you gave me, for I hid it, and here it is as you gave it me."—"Thou fool, (said his lord) for reasoning thus! thee know me to be a hard man, reaping where I had not sown, and gathering where I have not strowed! Did I not give thee a talent? was not that sowing? Did I not give thee a talent? was not that strawing? The talent itself, was thine ability to do good; thou oughtest, therefore, to have used it, and thou shouldest have made increase. Take the talent from him, and cast the unprofitable man into utter darkness. Let him be shut out from beholding our sociableness, seeing he will act no part with us."

Thus it is with every one that saith he can do no good in politics. God has given every man a political talent, and that is his ability; and that man that will not act his part in politics, is not deserving of a place amongst society. Those men that think they can do no good in politics, think others have a right to make laws for them, without asking their assent; that is the condition of slaves! and God has given us a natural desire to be free: therefore, those men that willingly neglect politics, are willing slaves, which is, in fact, an unnatural crime!

W. A.

## LETTER IX.

London, July 2nd, 1819.

AGAIN : the body politic has a great similarity to the natural body of a man ; the parliaments may be considered as the eyes and ears of the body ; the chief magistrate is the mouth, the civil and military powers, are the hands, nose, eyes, ears, and mouth, and these are all useless, unless they have ability. And what is the ability of the eyes to see? Their ability is their union with the rest of the body. The ability of the ears, also, is their union with the rest of the body ; and so of the mouth and the hands. If the union between the eyes and the body is injured, the eyes become weak of sight ; if the injury is great, the eyes cannot see at all, though in size and form they are just the same. If the union between the ears, the mouth, or the hands is injured, it has the same effect, and in proportion to the injury.

Therefore, they that neglect, and teach others to neglect, politics, are MURDERERS of the body politic, inasmuch as they destroy the union that should subsist ; and this murdering work has been carried on to such an extent, that the body politic is completely dislocated, and dislocation is equivalent to death, as far as it respects action. Is it any wonder, then, that the eyes cannot see distress in the land ? Is it any wonder that the ears cannot hear the prayers and cries of the poor ? Is it any wonder that we never hear the mouth speak ? Is it any wonder that the hands cannot protect the well-doers, and punish the evil-doers ? No ; it is no wonder at all ; it is madness itself to petition the parliament, or the king either, in their present dislocated condition.

The eyes, the ears, the mouth, and the hands, can never benefit the body, without an union, and the more perfect the union is, the happier and stronger is every part of the body. When the union of the body is perfect, support flows to all parts of the body alike ; and if one part of the body suffers, all the rest feels it.

But the lower parts of the body politic are now rotting or scaling away, for want of support, and are breaking down under the weight of the upper parts ; and the upper parts feel it not, but are bloated and puffed up with the support that should descend to the lower parts ; and all this is through that murderous practice of parsons and others, in teaching men to neglect politics, which is the destruction of the union between the parts

of the body politic. It is the union of the whole parts acting in concert with each other, that makes the whole body happy.

O ye blind guides, leaders of the blind, till we are all fallen into the ditch! Read the scriptures again, if you please, and see the apostle's reasoning, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12—26, just as if the apostle was addressing such fools as you, who say, that because a man has not an official appointment in public affairs, he has no need to meddle with politics. He saith, "If the foot shall say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it, therefore, not of the body?" And again, as if the apostle was addressing himself to such as you, who say the men in authority are sufficient to manage politics, he saith, "The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary!"

Now, then, ye murderers of the body politic, compare the above doctrine with that cursed, that devilish, that hell-born doctrine, that has found its way into Wesley's Hymn-book! There the head (monarch) is represented as being subject to no part of the body, only to God; there the devotee is made to sing about the monarch being a very great vicergerent from God. God's delegate! God's image! And then this thing, called a monarch, is represented as being something so obnoxious to men in general, that troops of angels are requested to guard his sacred head, and the troops are to be of a very particular sort too; they must be watchful troops. Nay, further, God himself is requested to turn warrior, and fight for his own image! Moreover, the devotee is made to tell God that the monarch is his peculiar care, and they request permission to pray for his defence, and never cease. What a monstrous doctrine does this hymn hold forth! Instead of the public being represented as the all-creating power for making a king, it is God! Instead of the public being represented as the proper protector of a king, it is a God and angels! As I said before, the public is like unto God, it can create, and it can destroy kings! and none can make it afraid. It can create itself a body politic, and can set the members every one of them in the body as it pleaseth, just as God has done with our natural bodies. The public can lay down its life, and take it up at pleasure; therefore, whatever the public creates, to that public is the creature answerable, and to no one else. God created us all as men; but a public must create itself as one body. We are all answerable to God as men, the beggar just as much as the king; but as members of the body politic, we are not answerable to God! but to that public that created us members. A king is a member in the political body, and if God had created one member, he would have created all the members in the body politic, and the form and shape of the body would have been unalterably fixed, and every member would have been passive, and forced to act the part which God has assigned it, for it would have had no power of itself to refuse. Our hands have no choice whether they will work or not;

our feet have no choice whether they will walk or not : just so would it have been with the body politic, if God had created one, it would be very curious to hear one member calling to God, the Creator of all the members, to protect the member called the head, from the insults of inferior members of the same body ! Call for a troop of angels, indeed ! to protect one member from the insults of another member of the same body ! It argues that the maker had not much skill in making of bodies composed of various members, while the members were so badly arranged as to destroy each other ! If a monarch is not a member of the body politic, but is a something that stands between God and the public to dictate what is, and what is not to be done ; to dictate what is, and what is not obedience, to God and himself, then, indeed, it may require a troop of angels to guard him from a wicked people, especially, as he has so much the image of a common man in his natural looks, and often the image of a wicked man in his actions, instead of being the image of God, as the poet calls him. When the public see this, it is a difficult matter to pay that respect and reverence to him, that is due ; and again, when we notice how these delegates of God, have contradicted each other in saying what is right, and what is wrong ; and sometimes the same delegate has altered, and the same action that he said was right at one time, he said was wrong at another ; either God Almighty is very changeable, or else his delegates ; if monarchs be his delegates, they have taken upon themselves to say things that he never commanded them to say ! And how are the people to know, if they are not to believe God's delegate, who they are to believe ? And if they do believe him, it is like to cause convulsions frequently, seeing they so often change their instructions. And then again, when the delegate is sometimes a man, and sometimes a woman, and the public having to change their sentiments so often, it is no wonder there is danger to be apprehended on such occasions ; and perhaps the poet had some of these changes in view, when he requested a troop of watchful angels to guard God's delegate.

I dare not make all the remarks respecting monarchy that I could wish. But look at the doctrine contained in the hymn which way one will, and I think nothing can be found more absurd amongst the cannibals in the east. I hope no one will think ill of Wesley's Hymn-book through these remarks. We often find rubbish closely connected with precious metals : for my part, I much admire the doctrine and spirit that runs through the hymns in general. But whatever is of human composition, is more or less imperfect ; and that is the reason why the public for the time being should seek to improve whatever has been handed to them from their ancestors. But instead of the improving work going on from one generation to another, it frequently happens that one absurdity is added to another, till there is such a mass of absurdity and wickedness, that it is unbearable ; and the public are

obliged to advert to first principles, and begin again where their ancestors had begun before them. And all this is through neglect, through that cursed doctrine which teaches any man to neglect politics.

It is my opinion, that England, as a nation, stands foremost in the quantity of mischief and wickedness that has been done on the earth during the reign of the present king! Fire and sword has she scattered far and wide with one hand, and Bibles with the other!! Good God! what must the heathens think of Christianity, when they judge of its merits by the actions of its votaries? As a nation we are called Christians, but, O, how hard it is to find Christianity amongst us! As a nation we are called free; and freedom is scarcely known! England, through the ambition of her rulers, and the deception practised by her priests, and the neglect of the people, has rushed forth to commit acts of violence through all quarters of the globe: she has failed to establish tyranny in North America, but she has succeeded in establishing tyranny in Europe. And having been so faithful to the cause of despotism at home and abroad, tyranny is now going to pay her the wages of her wickedness. She would fain evade the reckoning, and draw on account as usual, but it cannot be done. But at present I must say to my countrymen, as Christ said to his apostles, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now,"

W. A.

## LETTER X.

Now, then, friend Beaumont, what more need I to say? how ridiculous doth the conduct of your enemies appear to me after this view of the subject. I trust, their opposition to you, in your political career, has arisen from the same motive, as Paul's opposition to Christ. The apostle saith, he did it ignorantly, in unbelief, and on that account he had obtained mercy; and became a zealous promoter of that way which he had before persecuted. I hope your persecutors will follow his example, and I have no doubt you will be ready to receive them with open arms of friendship.

Go on, then, both with religious and political instructions; the men who judiciously attend to both, are the real friends of mankind: they are the real *noblemen*; they are the real *honourable men*; they are the real *right honourable*. Those who only attend to one of the two matters, are but partly useful to mankind at most, and frequently do as much harm by neglecting one, as they do good by attending to the other; and sometimes they do more hurt one way, than they do good another. To do things by halves is of very little use; and they who attend to religion, and neglect politics, can but teach even religion in part: he may teach religion in theory, without teaching politics. But I defy any man teaching religion in practice, without teaching politics in theory. There is a link that unites politics and religion together; and no man can consistently teach the one, without teaching the other.

By religion in theory, I mean that there is a God; that man will exist after this life; that there will be a day of judgment; that God will award rewards and punishments, according to the manner in which men have pleased, or displeased him in this world. Nature does not teach this, 'tis revelation! Religion in practice is a man conducting himself with reference to the day of judgment. And so far as God has made known his will, respecting what will please him in our conduct one with another, it is included in that golden rule, "*Do unto others as ye would others should do unto you.*" This, then, is religion in practice, so far as regards man's conduct with man. And it is what I mean by politics in theory; viz. that all men are equal. Nature teaches this. God is so anxious that this should be well known to every one, that he hath forbidden nature to contradict it.



But though nature teaches that all men are equal, she doth not offer sufficient motives to keep men so, or to restore them from inequality. But religion doth, for it tells men there is a God, whose will is that they should consider one another as equals, and that their conduct to each other must be upon that principle. If one man degrades himself below the standard of dignity in which God has placed him, and another man, through pride and ambition, puffeth himself up, and considers himself superior to others, they are both displeasing to God. And if the one wilfully neglects to rise, and the other obstinately refuses to fall to that sphere of action in which God requires them both to move, his displeasure awaits them, even after this life. But if they both attend to the order in which God has placed them, and in which he would have them move, his blessing will be upon them in this life, and eternal happiness await them in the next. These, then, are religious motives, and they are weightier than any that nature offers.

As the theory of politics is, that all men are equal, practical politics ought to be to adopt such rules and regulations as are calculated to keep men equal; and, consequently, in the best possible condition for practical religion. Religion can never universally prevail, where great inequality amongst men is general: they are as unfit for religion as the devil can make them. I very much admire the tenth article of the constitution of the state of Ohio in North America; which saith, "Hereditary emoluments, honours, and privileges, are for ever prohibited."

Where any nation, or people neglect to adopt such rules and regulations, as are calculated to keep men equal in point of right, inequality takes place, and where neglect is general, great inequality prevails; consequently, a great barrier to religion exists. The best thing we can aim at in teaching either religion, or politics, is, to set people a thinking. Man is a creature that God has made to think, and to act: while he is a child, his thinking and acting are alike; that is, he thinks and acts at random. A little child that is fatiguing itself from morning till night doth all its actions at random. And that is the reason why nothing substantial is produced by its labour; as the child grows up to manhood, it gets instructions to leave off a random way of acting, and acts according to rule and order, by which means its labour is productive. A great many people neglect to give their children instruction how to labour, because they are rich: this is a great evil; some poor people neglect this duty to their children. But in general, the children of the poor are blessed above those of the rich in this particular, inasmuch as they get instruction how to make their labour productive: on which account they are a blessing to society. While the others that had no instruction how to make their labour productive, are frequently a curse, or a burden to society.

But though, generally speaking, children get instruction how to leave off random work, so far as regards the labour of the hands;

yet the mind is suffered to labour at random upon those subjects that are not immediately connected with the labour of the hands. Religion, for instance, is a thing that belongs to the mind of man, and not the hands. Most men think about religion; but the great misfortune is, they too frequently think at random, and while this is the case, there is not that production in their minds, which we call a conviction.

The main business, therefore, of a minister of the Gospel, should be to teach people how to think on religion; to put them into a right way of thinking, that the produce of their thoughts may be a blessing to them. A minister of the Gospel is not useful any further, than he can persuade people to leave off random thinking, and think according to rule and order.

Politics are another thing for the mind of man to dwell upon, and it is too frequently the case that men think at random on this subject. And it is a subject which ought to have serious and steady consideration, as well as religious men may attend to the one, while they think at random on the other. And if a man be a fool in religious matters, it is no proof he is so in politics. A man may be wise and right as to politics, and ignorant and wrong as to religion; or he may be wise and right as to religion, and be ignorant and wrong as to politics. This is the case when he thinks seriously and steadily on the one subject, and at random on the other. Men may think at random on both subjects, and then they have no substantial production in their minds on either subject, but are children still, as far as respects thinking. Men may think seriously on both subjects, and be wise in both. Though men's conclusions on one subject are not exactly alike; yet there is a general similarity when the matter has been fairly investigated. There is a difference in the production of our hands; we vary as to the height and weight of our persons, we vary as to the physical strength we possess; variety is stamped on all things. Is it any wonder, then, that we vary as to the strength of our minds, to comprehend things that we think about? This causes a variety of opinions. But yet serious attention to any one subject, creates one general sentiment; therefore, in order that men may be of one mind, and one faith, and have one hope, it is necessary that they should have one way of thinking; that is, think seriously on the various subjects about which they disagree, and then they will never be in any fatal error. That is a fatal error which teaches men not to think at all. And it is a sure proof of vast iniquity, in that department which shunneth enquiry; for our Lord saith, "He that doeth good, cometh to the light; that is, he seeketh to be made known. But he that doeth evil, loveth darkness;" that is, shunneth enquiry, and strives to prevent enquiry. This opposition to those who are propagating enquiry, is what we call persecution; and the more persecution there is, the more reason there is to persevere; therefore, when men are persecuted for meddling with politics, it is a sure proof of great wickedness in

the management of politics. And though you have been persecuted, and had your name cast out as evil for attending to politics, I would say with the apostle, "Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap, if ye faint not." Wishing you health and prosperity in your labours, I remain your sincere friend and well wisher,

WILLIAM ANDREW.

P. S. An opportunity having presented itself for me and family going to America, I have engaged my passage. And as my relations and acquaintances are very numerous, and as some hundreds may probably wonder what could induce me to emigrate to the United States of America, I intend to write my reasons for so doing. And in order that all who wish to know, may have an opportunity of knowing, I intend to have my reasons printed, and sold as cheap as can be afforded.

And for the instruction of such as intend to follow, I intend (God willing) to write and print my preparations for the voyage; and an account of the voyage, and an account of those trades that I am in some measure acquainted with, with other information that I may be able to collect.

London, July 19th, 1819.

THE END.

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W. T. Sherwin, Printer, Lower Smith Street,  
Northampton Square.









